

Message Text

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ACTION AGRE-00

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PASS AGRICULTURE R. SMITH; J. RIESZ/FAS

EO 11652 N/A

TAGS: EAGR, ETRD, CA

SUBJECT MICHIGAN MEETING WITH GOC ANIMAL HEALTH

OFFICIALS ON PBB

1. A MICHIGAN DELEGATION OF FIVE HEADED BY STATE DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE DALE BALL MET WITH SEVERAL GOC OFFICIALS FROM AGRICULTURE AND NATIONAL HEALTH AND WELFARE MINISTRIES ON FEBRUARY 18. EMBASSY REPRESENTED BY AGATT WHO ARRANGED MEETING AT REQUEST OF USDA.

2. IN SUMMARIZING MEETING, CANADIAN CHAIRMAN DR. FRANK, \$843:594, ANIMAL PATHOLOGY DIVISION, HEALTH OF ANIMALS CDA STATED:

A. MICHIGANI AND CANADIAN CHEMISTS INVOLVED IN TESTING FOR PBB PRESENCE WERE IN COMPLETE AGREEMENT ON METHODOLOGY AND FINDINGS AND IT WAS EVIDENT THAT THESE PERSONS CAN WORK TOGETHER IN A COORDINATED MANNER.

B. THE PRESENCE OF PBB WHICH CANADIAN TESTS CONFIRMED IN ONE MICHIGAN BEEF CARACASS WILL CONTINUE TO BE INVESTIGATED. THE PUZZLING ELEMENT IS THAT THE DISTRIBUTION OF PBB ISOMERS IN THE CARACASS IN QUESTION IS STRIKINGLY DIFFERENT FROM THAT FOUND BY MICHIGAN TESTS ON SOME 30,000 SAMPLES OR WHAT COULD BE EXPECTED FROM THE GENERAL ISOMERIC COMPOSITION OF PBB. MICHIGAN IS CONDUCTING TESTS ON SILAGE

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AND SOIL SAMPLES FROM THE FARM WHERE THE STEER ORIGINATED.

C. DIRECTOR BALL'S PROPOSAL FOR A CERTIFICATION SYSTEM SIMILAR TO THAT DEVELOPED FOR DES IS ACCEPTABLE IN PRINCIPLE TO GOC.

3. COMMENTS:

A. CORRECTION - EARLIER AGATT IN TELCONSD HAD ADVISED RIESZ/USDA AND BLAKEMORE/STATE THAT CANADIAN TESTS SHOWED PRESENCE OF PBB IN 36 CARCASSES. THIS INFO WAS BASED ON INITIAL TESTS. SUBSEQUENT RETESTING REVEALED PBB PRESENCE IN ONLY ONE CARCASS, WHICH WAS CONDEMNED AND OTHERS RELEASED.

B. CANADIAN TESTS AT GUELPH HAVE ALSO BEEN RUN ON TEN SAMPLES EACH PORK BELLIES, PORK LOINS, BEEF KIDNEYS AND BEEF FAT ORIGINATING IN DETROIT. ALL RESULTS NEGATIVE AND THESE TESTS DISCONTINUED. TESTS ON

CATTLE ORIGINATING IN MICHIGAN ARE BEING CONTINUED. HOWEVER, BOXED BEEF FROM MICHIGAN PLANTS ACCEPTED WITHOUT TESTS IF USDA CERTIFIES THAT

CATTLE DID NOT ORIGINATE IN MICHIGAN.

CANADIAN BUYERS SEEKING NON-MICHIGAN ORIGIN CATTLE AND BEEF DUE TO DELAY IN RELEASE PENDING TEST RESULTS.

C. GOC REPORTED TEST RESULTS ON CATTLE OF CANADIAN ORIGIN FOR PBB ALL NEGATIVE.

D. DIRECTOR BALL WAS NOT SPECIFIC AS TO CONDITIONS IN HIS CERTIFICATION

PROPOSAL OTHER THAN THAT CERTIFICATE WOULD GIVE ASSURANCE THAT FAT CATTLE

FROM MICHIGAN FEED LOTS HAD NOT BEEN EXPOSED TO PBB IN ANY MANNER. GOC

OFFICIALS IN ACCEPTING THIS APPROACH IN PRINCIPLE, STATED THAT CERTIFICATION WOULD HAVE TO INVOLVE U.S. FEDERAL AUTHORITIES.

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E. BOTH SIDES RECOGNIZED THAT DUE TO PUBLIC MISUNDERSTANDINGS BOTH CANADA AND MICHIGAN HAD BEEN FORCED TO TAKE ACTIONS THAT WERE NOT SUPPORTED BY SCIENTIFIC FINDINGS. NO OFFICIAL MINUTES WERE KEPT. MEETING CONDUCTED IN AMICABLE, COOPERATIVE ATMOSPHERE. DUEMLING

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